

Trip 2 – Episode #24 – And Now For Something Completely Different – Part 4

I honestly don't know how we decided to go to the town of Bisbee Arizona. I guess it was partly because we were experiencing chilly weather and we wanted to be as far south as possible. Or maybe it was because we wanted to go to Tombstone but didn't want to take the main highway. Whatever. Are we glad we found Bisbee!

After only a few days in New Mexico (we hope to be back there on our return trip when it won't be quite so cold!), we entered Arizona, which we hoped would be a little warmer.

We found out there was a campground just south of Bisbee, in a community called Naco, which is right on the Mexican border.

It was our first time seeing The Wall.



It's really quite jaw-dropping. And you can't help wondering what the point is. Especially when you hear the locals talk about how they just walk through the border crossing, without a passport, and go to Mexico for lunch or dinner and then walk back. And obviously Mexicans cross back and forth too, as they've done with no issues for as long as anyone can remember.



The campground was really great. There were beautiful cypress trees throughout the park, and on the first evening we had a gorgeous sunset.



Jim helpfully points out that it extended all the way around the horizon.



We met our neighbours, Sam and Shawn, who, along with being interesting in their own right (they're both artists and she used to work in the circus, training people on the trapeze!), they had interesting travelling companions.

Yes, they all live in the camper, including Floyd (centre). I was talking to the manager of the campground and she said Floyd was better behaved than a lot of the dogs that people travelled with.

The surprises continued when we drove toward Bisbee.



When we'd first driven by Bisbee, before turning south to our campground, we'd noticed the bright rust-coloured mountains (how could you not?) and assumed there was some mining going on.



On our way into town, we saw just how significant a role mining had played in the town. And how the surrounding territory had been ravaged.





Seeing the way the mountains had been hacked away just outside of town, I wondered if people had lost their homes. And I soon found out that LOTS of people had. In fact, the town of Lowell, which is just outside Bisbee was basically erased by the strip mining. Which is a sad story.

However. The (former) residents of Lowell (who are now part of Bisbee) decided to create a lasting memory of their town, so they created a street that captures the middle of the 20th century, with storefronts (mostly false fronts, but some real ones). They also acquired and fixed up all kinds of vehicles. It was very cool to walk down the street and see what they'd done.











Most of the stores were false fronts.



But there was a café – The Bisbee Breakfast Club, that was open – albeit with odd hours.



And the Harley Davidson shop was actually a sales and service shop for Harleys.



In fact, while we were there, a gang of Harley riders arrived. Were we nervous? Nah! They were such creampuffs, they asked if I would take a picture of them in front of the store. And when I gave the guy his iPhone back, he gave me \$5 for my trouble!



Our next surprise came when we drove into Old Bisbee.



Having seen what had been done to its surroundings, we didn't know what to expect in town – except that the manager at our campground told us it was really great.

If you'd dropped me here, I would've thought we were a town in southern Italy or France.







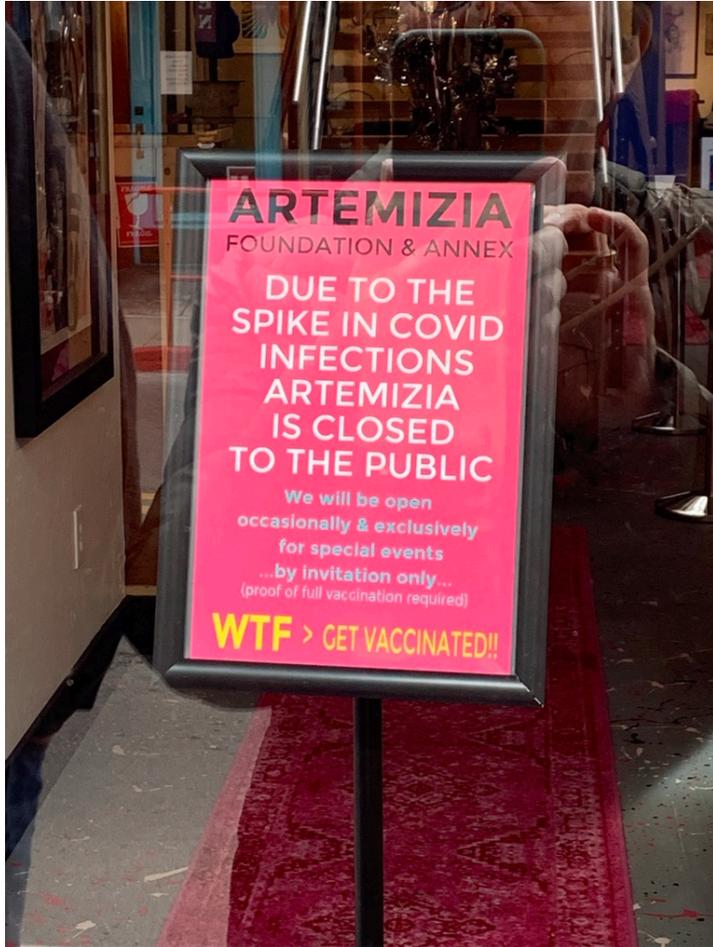
It was so full of colour and charm, and the shops and cafes were cool and welcoming and unexpected. Many of the signs around town were positive and reassuring.





Who expects a
patisserie in
Bisbee
Arizona??
Apparently lots
of people who
live in Bisbee.







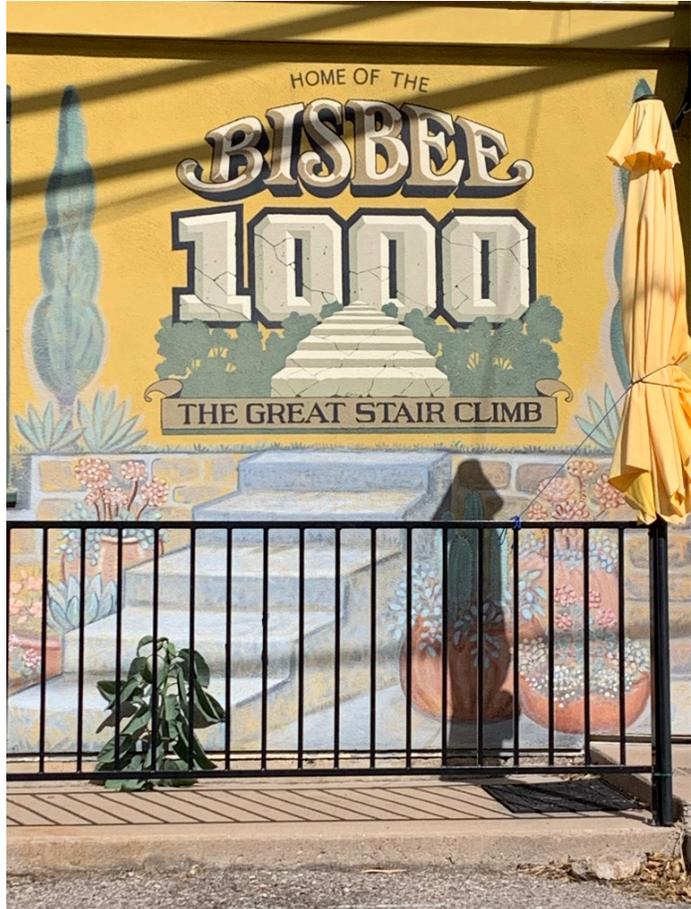
Lots of interesting things to look at, for visitors...



... And for dogs.



One of the themes we saw throughout the town was the Bisbee 1000 Great Stair Climb, which is apparently a campaign to keep the stairs that connect the different levels of the town.





It felt like a fun, vibrant, together town. And apparently we weren't the only ones to think so. Lots of people are deciding Bisbee is the place to be. The manager at our RV park said she's trying to find a place to rent (she's getting tired of living in her camper) and it's impossible to find a rental. She begged me not to promote Bisbee. So if you decide you want to go there, don't tell them you heard about it from us.

We had another glorious sunset before we left.



Our next day's travel would take us to one of the best-known names in cowboy lore: Tombstone. Do you think it was a tourist destination? Dead right.